

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SANA 03766 011230Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 PM-05  
NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 AID-05  
OMB-01 TRSE-00 SMS-02 SAA-01 SES-02 /071 W  
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O 011201Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SANA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5540  
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE  
USMTM RIYADH IMMEDIATE  
CHUSMTM DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SANA 3766

FROM R. J. MURRAY

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MASS, YE, SA  
SUBJECT: MEETING OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
MURRAY WITH YAR PRESIDENT SALIH

REF: SANA 3765 DTG 011200Z AUG 78

1. REFTEL PROVIDES REPORT ON SUBSTANCE OF MY CONVERSATIONS  
WITH PRESIDENT SALIH OF YEMEN. THIS PROVIDES IMPRESSIONS  
OF SALIH. SALIH WAS NERVOUS WHEN HE MET WITH US,  
CONTINUALLY RUBBING HIS PRAYER BEADS. HE SEEMED IMPRESSED  
BY THE PRESENCE WITH ME OF TWO AMERICAN COLONELS FROM  
WASHINGTON, AND SOMEWHAT APPREHENSIVE INITIALLY AS THEY  
TOOK NOTES. AS RANSOM HAS EARLIER REPORTED, SALIH IS NOT  
A MAN OF SMALL TALK OR MANY SMILES. HE SITS ON THE EDGE  
OF HIS CHAIR, STARING INTENTLY, HIS VOICE RISING TO UNDERLINE  
HIS POINT. HE IS DIRECT--EXCEEDINGLY DIRECT.  
(I ASKED HIM TO EXPLAIN TO ME HIS VIEW OF THE  
SITUATION IN THE YEMENS. HE RESPONDED: "YOU KNOW ALL  
ABOUT THAT. WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS HOW YOU WILL HELP

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ME.") HE IS A MAN OF ACTION, SOMETHING OF A  
ZEALOT PERHAPS, ANXIOUS FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT, AND  
IMPATIENT FOR THINGS TO HAPPEN. HE WAS BLUNT IN  
SAYING HE UNDERSTOOD THE SOVIETS TO BE A GREAT DANGER  
TO YEMENA DN TO HIM PERSONALLY, AND THAT HE WOULD  
THROW THE RUSSIANS OUT IF HE HAD AN ASSURED ALTERNA-  
TIVE (I.E., THE USG). IT WAS PLAIN THAT IN

HIS VIEW, THE SOVIETS NOT ONLY PROVIDE HIM ARMS  
ESSENTIAL FOR HIS FORCES BUT ARE A COUNTERWEIGHT TO  
THE SAUDIS. HE MADE A BIG THING OF HAVING A DIRECT  
RELATIONSHIP WITH US, INDEPENDENT OF SAUDI ARABIA, AND  
NO DOUBT SEES US AS WAY OF KEEP SOME POLITICAL  
DISTANCE BETWEEN HIMSELF AND HIS SAUDI SPONSORS.  
HE GAVE NO SIGNS OF HAVING A POLITICAL MIND. HE  
IS A BLUNT MOUNTAIN SOLDIER.

2. MY OVERALL SENSE OF SALIH WAS THAT HE IS A  
SHREWD, TOUGH GUY WHO IS ANXIOUS ABOUT HIS OWN  
POSITION IN YEMEN AND WANTS TO ESTABLISH HIMSELF  
QUICKLY; A MAN WHO WOULD LIKE TO GET RID OF THE  
SOVIETS WHO CLEARLY PREFER THE SOUTH YEMENIS OVER HIM,  
WHO ARE UNRELIABLE PARTNERS THEREFORE, AND WHO KEEP HIM  
ON A SHORT LEASH FOR MILITARY SUPPLIES; AND A MAN WHO DOES  
NOT WANT TO BE TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON THE SAUDIS. HE SEES  
US A A WAY TO HELP HIM WITH EACH OF THESE INTERESTS.  
AS FAR AS I COULD TEM FROM ONE CONVERSATION, HE IS  
TOUGH ENOUGH AND SMART ENOUGH TO HAVE A GOOD CHANCE  
OF SURVIVING. HE SEEMED SINCERE, AND SOMEONE WITH  
WHOM WE COULD WORK. CHARGE RANSOM SHARES THIS  
VIEW.  
RANSOM

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, MILITARY EQUIPMENT, MILITARY TRAINING, MEETINGS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 01 aug 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Film Number:** D780314-0667  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
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**Subject:** MEETING OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE MURRAY WITH YAR PRESIDENT SALIH  
**TAGS:** CVIS, SREF, (SALIH, ALI ABDALLAH), (MURRAY, ROBERT)  
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